

Missing Children Europe

Missing People is the UK member of Missing Children Europe (MCE) – a Europe-wide umbrella organisation representing voluntary organisations which work against child disappearance and sexual exploitation.

Why is MCE needed?

Increased freedom of movement, technological developments and the expansion of the Schengen area (which currently covers 400 million people) has brought the need for a Europe-wide approach to the problem of missing and sexually exploited children. MCE believes that cooperation across borders is vital, because “every missing child, every victim of sexual exploitation or abuse, deserves to be looked after and cared for, whether in his or her home country or not” (MCE, 2007:6).

What is MCE’s mission and aim?

Missing Children Europe’s mission is to ensure that conditions exist to guarantee minimum professional standards, to prevent children going missing or being sexually exploited, and to help children that go missing or are sexually exploited. The organisation also encourages transnational cooperation across Europe, supports the extension of members’ activities and helps members to implement European legislation.

How does MCE work to fulfil its mission?

MCE looks to fulfil its mission through various projects that seek to improve provisions for missing and exploited children and their families.

One example of this is the MCE led project to implement 116 000 as a European wide hotline for reporting missing children and supporting their families. Launched on International Missing Children’s Day 2009, the hotline works across 22 European countries, providing support for missing children and their families by linking them to a national dedicated organisation. Other on-going projects include campaigning to establish child alert systems across Europe, and establishing and developing national centres for missing and exploited children in EU Member States.

How is MCE structured?

Missing Children Europe has 28 member organisations from 19 Member States, which include Switzerland. Membership depends on organisations meeting certain criteria, and there are three categories of this: operational; associational and affiliate.

MCE is governed by its members. Members meet annually for a General Assembly. MCE’s Board of Directors is made up of elected members and independent administrators, and meets twice a year. The President of MCE is elected by members every 3 years and chairs the General Assembly and Board meetings.

MCE is supported by its General Secretariat, which undertakes activity to:

- Represent its members at European institutions.
- Promote the exchange of best practice and the sharing of expertise between members.
- Develop European tools to aid the prevention of the disappearance and sexual exploitation of children.
- Cooperate with relevant international organisations.

MCE uses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a foundation of its activities.

History

MCE was established in 2001 at the European Parliament by founding members: Child Focus (Belgium); La Mouette (France); Aurora (Italy); Elterninitiative Vermisste Kinder (Germany) and Rat auf Draht (Austria).

Missing People's role

Missing People is an operational member of Missing Children Europe and is the only member from the UK.

Further information and references

For further information on MCE visit www.missingchildreneurope.eu. For more details of Missing People's role within MCE, please email info@missingpeople.org.uk

Missing Children Europe. (2007) [*Annual Report*](#).

For more information please contact the Policy and Research team by email at policyandresearch@missingpeople.org.uk

Published: February 2013